

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ISTANB 00745 110523Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15
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FM AMCONSUL ISTANBUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9749
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY NICOSIA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMCONSUL IZMIR

UNCLAS ISTANBUL 0745

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, TU
SUBJ: ECEVIT RESPONDS TO GREEK MINORITY COMPLAINTS

REF: ISTANBUL 0706

1. MORNING OF MARCH 9 AT AIRPORT IN ISTANBUL BEFORE DEPARTURE FOR MONTREUX SUMMIT WITH PRIME MINISTER CARAMANLIS, PRIME MINISTER ECEVIT COMMENTED TO PRESS ON HIS VISIT TUESDAY WITH DELEGATION FROM GREEK ORTHODIX CHURCH (REFTEL) AND MADE SWEEPING COMMITMENT FOR GOT TO ACT OR ANNOUNCED ACTION ALREADY TAKEN ON MAJOR COMPLAINTS OF GREEK MINORITY. PRIME MINISTER STATED THAT IMMEDIATELY AFTER HIS MEETING TUESDAY HE HAD APPOINTED INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMISSION HEADED BY DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER ORHAN EYUPOGLU (ACTING PRIME MINISTER WITH ECEVIT ABROAD) TO STUDY ISSUES RAISED BY CHURCH DELEGATION. HE ALSO SAID THAT OVER LAST TWO DAYS, LEGAL SOLUTION TO SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS HAD ALREADY BEEN FOUND. INCLUDED ON INTER-MINISTERIAL COMMISSION WERE FOREIGN MINISTRY, MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF FOUNDATIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOUNDATIONS.

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2. SPECIFIC ISSUES RAISED AT MARCH 7 MEETING IN ANKARA WHICH ECEVIT SAID WOULD BE OR HAD ALREADY BEEN RESOLVED INCLUDE FOLLOWING:

1) FOR METROPOLITANS WHO HAVE HAD DIFFICULTY GETTING PASSPORTS FOR TRAVEL ABROAD, ECEVIT SAID PASSPORTS WILL

BE ISSUED IMMEDIATELY UPON APPLICATION;

2) ADJUSTMENTS WILL BE MADE IN CLASSIFICATION OF CERTAIN CHURCH AND COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS (WHICH PRESUMEDLY EFFECTS THEIR TAX STATUS):

3) INSPECTION FEES PAID TO DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF FOUNDATION BY GREEK COMMUNITY INSTITUTIONS WILL BE REDUCED AND INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE ELIMINATED:

4) PERMISSION FOR RESTORATION WORK ON PATRIARCHATE AND OTHER BUILDINGS WILL BE SYMPATHETICALLY CONSIDERED:

5) QUALIFIED CANDIDATES FOR VACANT POSITIONS AS PRINCIPALS OF GREEK PRIVATE SCHOOLS WILL BE APPOINTED AS SOON AS THEIR NAMES ARE PROVIDED.

3. AFTER ECEVIT'S DEPARTURE, DELEGATION OF METROPOLITANS MET THAT SAME DAY WITH EYUPOGLU IN GOVERNOR OF ISTANBUL'S OFFICE, PRESUMEDLY TO DISCUSS IMPLEMENTATION OF PRIME MINISTER'S DIRECTIVE.

4. COMMENT: APPEARS ECEVIT IS GOING A LONG WAY TOWARD ACCOMMODATING GREEK MINORITY IN ISTANBUL. PICKING UP ON CURRENT THEME OF SOME OF TURKISH PRESS, HE MAY NOW FEEL ON STRONGER GROUND FOR RAISING QUESTION OF PROBLEMS CON-
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CERNING TURKISH MINORITY IN GREECE WITH CARAMANLIS.
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